

ROUND TABLE MEETING SUMMARY

A SUSTAINABLE VISION FOR WASHINGTON'S SOLID WASTE SYSTEM

MEETING 3 May 15, 2001

WENATCHEE - CENTRAL REGION

What is the Round Table Meeting Series?

The "Sustainable Vision for Washington State's Solid Waste System" round table meeting series (March-June 2001) brings community, business, and government together to identify coordinated approaches to solid waste issues. Diverse perspectives have been raised during these meetings. The outcomes of the meeting series are recommendations from each of the four regions for use in determining the priority issues and action alternatives that will be included in the state solid waste plan revision. Issues, goals, and strategies, in common within regions and across the state, will be noted in these recommendations, along with those that are unique to a region. All interested residents throughout the state are encouraged to join these regional dialogues during the remaining June meetings regardless of whether or not you participated in earlier meetings.

SUMMARY OF MEETING 3

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of Meeting 3 was for participants to identify strategies or specific actions that would best accomplish the "milestones" (interim goals with deadlines) identified in Meeting 2. These strategies provide the foundation for Ecology's further exploration of alternatives to assist in moving toward a more effective and a more sustainable solid waste system, both in the long-term and the short-term. In addition, participants reviewed a draft vision for the state solid waste plan and provided feedback for a revised vision that incorporates participants' views from all three round table meetings.

PROCESS TO DATE

Cheryl Strange, project manager for the state plan, explained that Ecology began working on a revision to the State Solid Waste Plan with the State Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) and a number of stakeholders in early 2000. Work groups developed issue papers, which serve as the foundation for the Round Table discussions. The full text of the issue papers can be found in the document entitled "Issues Identification: Issues for Consideration and Discussion" #01-07-001 on the project website at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/swplan>.

The Round Table Meeting Series, March - June 2001, is the public review and input process for this stage of the state solid waste plan revision. This is the time to identify what is needed to create a state solid waste plan that will have support from the diverse communities that will be asked to participate in implementation activities. The plan recommendations are not written at this time; there is no drafted language to review and comment on. The regional recommendations drafted at the round tables will provide a foundation for the next phase of developing action alternatives for consideration, which will follow the round tables in the summer of 2001. Public review and input on the plan options and recommendations will be held next year and the draft plan will then be written.

SMALL GROUP EXERCISES

Participants were asked to identify specific actions or strategies they think would best accomplish the milestones identified in the region at Meeting 2. Participants worked as individuals to brainstorm strategies for the milestones they considered most important for the region in both the long term and to meet today's needs. These strategies were posted on worksheets reflecting breakout group perspectives.

The participants then had a facilitated discussion to identify the milestones and strategies that are most important to them. Meeting participants also reviewed the draft vision statement and provided additional feedback for use in developing a regionally recommended vision for the state solid waste plan.

In this summary regional feedback on a draft vision for the state solid waste plan has been compiled from each of the three round table meetings and developed into a draft vision from that region. The strategies from all breakout groups have been merged beneath the milestone topic heading under which they were posted. The strategies were grouped within similar approaches by the neutral meeting facilitators, not the participants. The draft vision and strategies from Meeting 3 are contained in the sections of the summary below.

NEXT STEPS

In June, round table meeting participants will review the region's round table participants' contributions to a draft vision and the milestones and strategies to accomplish that vision. Participants will engage in a facilitated exploration of support for the draft vision, and common perspectives on key milestones and strategies. The elements in common, along with all milestones and strategies, will become the regional recommendation for Ecology's consideration in the state solid waste plan revision. You are encouraged to attend and to share your perspectives on a sustainable future for solid waste in your region.

Below is a draft vision reaching beyond a 20 year timeline for the state solid waste plan. It has been tailored to include feedback received from the first three Central Region round table meetings. Participants will be asked in Meeting 4 to offer their feedback on this regionally tailored vision. The original draft version published in the 'Issues Identification' document can be viewed on the project website at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/swplan>.

DRAFT CENTRAL REGIONAL VISION STATEMENT FOR STATE SOLID WASTE PLAN

A sustainable solid waste system exists for Washington State that engages all residents in balancing the economic, environmental, and social needs of their regions through waste reduction, material reuse resource and energy conservation, and pollution prevention. Movement toward a sustainable economic system is seen as a progression over time, as the efforts to protect the environment and human health and to promote economic development merge. A sustainable economic system exists that addresses the state's diverse regions and is responsive to urban and rural characteristics of the state.

Businesses economic survival is fundamental in the process of moving toward sustainability. The regions' cultures and historical economic activities are considered important. Businesses increasingly balance material and energy use with practices that reinvest in environmental capital, recognizing that such stewardship is the basis for their long-term survival and profit.

Individuals recognize their role in achieving and maintaining sustainability as inhabitants and consumers. Consumers demand, are provided with, and choose goods and services with the lowest life-cycle impacts on energy and materials use. Financial constraints on individuals to participate in solid waste programs are taken into consideration as part of implementation design.

Government economic development policies provide incentives to businesses and industry to achieve and maintain sustainability. State and local planning is coordinated to assure local needs are addressed. Solid waste mandates and initiatives allow local jurisdictions to set levels for incentives and sustainable program development. Roles of the state and local jurisdictions are clear; the state plan sets long-term goals and initiatives, and local plans specify implementation activities.

Communities create and sustain local systems that support growth within the limits of the environmental carrying capacity. Education, which spans across all solid waste issues, is incorporated in each community. Small communities' unique challenges are acknowledged in planning and service design, and public health is a fundamental consideration in the solid waste system.

CENTRAL STRATEGIES AND MILESTONES LISTED BY TOPIC

The following table contains all Strategies from Meeting 3, which are grouped under the Milestone topic headings where participants posted them. Below the Milestone topic heading is a brief summary statement that consists of milestone themes summarized by the facilitators. Participants were assured that these summary statements are not intended to reflect every milestone posted under that topic heading and that the placement of strategies under these statements does not indicate support for all elements of the statements.

The Strategies from Meeting 3 are grouped under sub headings that capture the themes of the actions recommended to achieve the milestones. The summary is in order of importance, as indicated by participants at Meetings 2 and 3. Each Strategy indicates the initial of the sector breakout group in which it was created. The initials for the sector breakout groups stand for the following:

- (B) - Business
- (E) - Environment
- (G) - Government
- (SW) - Solid Waste Industry
- (CC) - Community & Civic Groups

Milestone Topic: ROLES AND AUTHORITIES (Issue Paper 2)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years all levels of government will work together toward solid waste goals. In particular, state and local regulations will be coordinated. Environmental and health regulations will encourage innovation and solid waste rules and responsibilities will be clear. And there will be less planning requirements and more implementation.

STRATEGIES

Regulatory Action

- Statewide recognition that one size does not fit all and that urbanized approaches, programs, and strategies are not always implementable within rural areas (G)
- State plan should be signed off on by the state legislature and included in the governor's budget (G)
- Remove, change, clarify enforcement agencies that duplicate solid waste enforcement (G)
- Develop a strategy to reduce government role in regulatory matters based upon a hierarchy of risks to humans and environment (G)
- Regulations that do not hinder ways to maintain local authority, i.e. special districts (G)

Milestone Topic: STATE AND LOCAL SOLID WASTE PLANNING

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years state and local solid waste plans will be coordinated and local plans will be funded. Government understands that rural Eastern Washington operates under different constraints than Western Washington.

STRATEGIES

Comments and Concerns

- Locally adopted solid waste plans should be utilized as the cornerstone of the state plan (G)
- Planning will concurrently address long term needs while maintaining the means to be flexible and responsive to changes in scientific knowledge, funding, and political will (G)
- Local plans need flexibility for funding and concurrence with state plan (G)
- State plan needs to be general enough for each local plan to have ability to develop and tailor local needs (G)

Milestone Topic: FUNDING FOR GOVERNMENT SOLID WASTE PROGRAMS

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years there will be stable and long term funding sources to implement state and local solid waste plans. And solid waste funding will not be dependent upon waste generation.

STRATEGIES

Funding for Government Programs

- Reestablish the Solid Waste Management Account (G)
- Develop strategy to reduce state funding of solid waste (G)
- Funding for solid waste programs - establish independent and dedicated state account to be directly allocated to local governments (G)

Regulatory Action

- Allow flexible paths for local jurisdictions to accomplish local goals (G)

Milestone Topic: ADDRESS SPECIAL WASTE STREAMS (Issue Paper 1)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years, construction debris, electronic waste, and tires will be diverted from landfills; almost all green waste will be composted; and wrecked cars will be reused.

STRATEGIES

Regulatory Action

- Ban tire disposal in municipal solid waste landfills and ban long-term storage of tires to under 1 year (G)

Financial Incentives and Disincentives

- Fee on tires to encourage refund for all tires returned to retailer (G)

Partnerships

- Partner with food processing industry to develop strategies to reduce or beneficially use organic wastes (B)

Materials Processing and Management

- Identify statewide strategy for tires so they do not just move around the state as a local problem (G)

Milestone Topic: CHANGING BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years citizens will be educated on the impacts of solid waste. As a result, 75 % of consumers will make purchasing decisions based on sustainability.

STRATEGIES

Materials Processing and Management

- Communities with the potential to have landfills should be encouraged to handle their own waste stream and not ship off to regionals (G)

Education

- Present the educational component as a high priority to achieve sustainability (G)
- Fund education in schools and to the public in general to change behavior (G)

Milestone Topic: RECYCLING (Issue Paper 11)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years recycling services will be readily available and nearly all materials currently considered waste will be resources or products. Within 30 years there will be little disposal - less than 1 lb per person of waste per day - and ideally all materials currently considered waste will be resources or products. In addition, product stewardship will be accepted as a normal manufacturing practice. Within 60 years garbage will be converted to energy.

STRATEGIES

New Data and Measurement Tools

- Provide local comprehensive waste generation studies and keep current (G)

Full Cost Accounting

- Identify and take out hidden costs in recycling (G)

Partnerships

- Use Ecology and solid waste coordinator meetings to identify solid waste reduction / diversion or recycling opportunities, jointly develop implementation strategies, and do it (G)

Milestone Topic: LITTER AND ILLEGAL DUMPING (Issue Paper 3)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years both public and natural areas will not be littered. This will occur through litter abatement programs and litter education.

STRATEGIES

Education

- Increase education and enforcement (G)
- Increase education and enforcement with the same funds for CLCP (E)

Partnerships

- Develop CLCP/ DOT/ DOC/ Ecology, health departments, and agencies partnerships to clean up illegal dumps, educate public on cost of dumping, and enforce against dumpers (G)

Regulatory Action

- Require waste disposal accounts per business and residence (G)

Milestone Topic: LANDFILLS (Issue Paper 9)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years closed landfills will be identified and cleaned up where required. Within 30 years landfills will become recovery centers and abandoned/closed landfills will be mined to make use of disposed products.

STRATEGIES

Materials Processing and Management

- Landfills can be designed for future mining of materials (G)

Milestone Topic: ACTUAL / COMPLETE COSTS OF SOLID WASTE (Issue Paper 10)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years waste bills will include the environmental impacts of solid waste services, and the cost of waste will be identified by the community. In addition, the funding sources for solid waste programs and services will no longer be based on high volume low cost rationale. Within 20 years the market will reflect the "reality" of all costs.

STRATEGIES

New Data and Measurement Tools

- Utilize an LCA model that is standardized and used uniformly (G)

Incentives and Disincentives

- Incentives-based NOT penalties-based (G)

Regulatory Action

- Regulations are only passed in legislation with funding identified (G)

Milestone Topic: RECYCLING MARKETS (Issue Paper 11)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years, stable markets will be developed for recyclables and recycling services will be readily available. Within 30 years, markets will exist for all waste.

Milestone Topic: RECYCLABLE PRODUCTS (Issue Paper 11)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years nearly all products will be recyclable and all packaging will be recyclable or reusable. Within 30 years all products will be recyclable. Within 60 years all products will be reusable or biodegradable.

Milestone Topic: RECYCLING SERVICES (Issue Paper 11)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years educational programs will utilize partnerships within the community to learn about, engage in, and support services that reflect the importance of recycling and accomplish it. Within 20 years there will be 50% rural curbside recycling collection. Within 60 years there will be 100% rural curbside recycling collection.

Milestone Topic: WASTE GENERATION REDUCTION (Issue Paper 6)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years communities will take responsibility for the waste they generate. Consequently, there will be a 20% -25% per capita decrease in waste generation.

STRATEGY

Education

- Starts with product stewardship and education (G)

Milestone Topic: WASTE DIVERSION (Issue Paper 5)

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years waste will go down by 25% and within 15 years 50% of waste will be diverted.

STRATEGY

New Data and Measurement Tools

- Conduct a statewide waste characterization study (G)

Milestone Topic: TOXINS REDUCTION

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years there will be a 50% reduction in toxics generated. In addition, there will be education regarding proper disposal of domestic hazardous waste - e.g. home health care waste.

STRATEGY

Comment and Concern

- Need strategies for long term impact (G)

Milestone Topic: HAZARDOUS WASTE HANDLING

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years hazardous waste disposal will be economical and convenient for all citizens. In addition, hazardous waste handling will increase.

STRATEGY

Comment and Concern

- Need strategy for short term and long term (G)

Milestone Topic: DISPOSAL FACILITIES

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years there will be a new approach to disposal facilities. Landfill operations will be converted to waste-to-energy operations and new ways to use waste will be explored - e.g. grind/bio reactors and gas compost.

Milestone Topic: INCENTIVES FOR INDUSTRY

Milestone Topic Summary Statement from Meeting 2: Within 10 years incentives such as carbon-crediting recycling stocks will be in place.



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